

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

PA-03 RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SPC-03 /073 R

66605

DRAFTED BY: EA/P:STAFF:PP/EB

APPROVED BY: EA/P:AHROSEN

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R 012120Z OCT 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

USDEL JEC PARIS

USLO PEKING

USSAG NAKHON PHANOM

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (O M I S S I O N P A R A 1 5)

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E.O. 11652:NA

TAGS: PFOR, XC, US

SUBJECT: OCTOBER 1 PRESS SUMMARY

INDOCHINA

1. SCHANBERG (NYT) AT SALA LEK PRAM, 35 MI. NW OF PP WHERE ROUTE 5 TO BATTAMBANG IS CUT, REPORTS GKR SOLDIERS COMPLAIN ABOUT NOT BEING PAID AND SAY THAT US SUPPLIES "DISAPPEAR HALFWAY TO US". FANK UNITS UNDERSTRENGTH AND POORLY ARMED. REINFORCEMENTS WILL HAVE TO BE SENT SOON SINCE MAIN BATTAMBANG RICE HARVEST WILL BEGIN MID-NOV. AND SHIPMENT IS CRUCIAL TO PP'S SURVIVAL. SOLDIERS REPEAT RUMORS THAT REINFORCEMENTS WITH ARMORED CARS ARE ON THE WAY, AND ARE CONFIDENT THE ROAD WILL BE RE-OPENED AS ALWAYS IN THE PAST. THEY ARE USUALLY SERIOUS AND PESSIMISTIC ABOUT WAR ENDING "UNLESS LON NOL AND SIHANOUK COME TOGETHER". THE BETTER-ARMED KI, REPORTEDLY BOLSTERED WITH VC/NVA SOLDIERS, FREQUENTLY TAUNT FANK TO ATTACK. KI STRATEGY SEEMS TO BE TO DRAW AS MANY TROOPS AS POSSIBLE AWAY FROM PP PERIMETER, PRESUMABLY SO REBEL UNITS CAN GET INTO POSITION FOR A PUSH AGAINST CAPITAL AFTER DRY SEASON STARTS. WHILE GKR OFFICIALS SAY TROOP MORALE IS HIGH, AND THIS MAY BE SO AMONG DEFENDERS OF KOMPONG CHAM, SITUATION HAS NOT CHANGED FOR MOST OF THE POORLY-SUPPLIED

AND POORLY-PAID SOLDIERS AROUND PP.

2. FIGHTING CONTINUES ON SOUTHERN PERIMETER 10 MI. FROM PP. FANK PINCER OPERATION ON PP WESTERN PERIMETER AIMED AT THMAT PONG HALTED AS 1 COLUMN RETREATS WITHIN 2-1/2 MI. OF LINKUP. ROUTES 4 AND 5 REMAIN CLOSED (AP, SUN; WP). KI RETREAT FROM NIGHT ATTEMPT TO CROSS TONLE SAP RIVER NORTH OF PP AFTER BEING SPOTTED BY FANK; PROBABLE TARGET WAS MAJOR POL STORAGE AREA 1 MI. FROM CITY. FANK REPORTS HEAVY FIGHTING 12 MI. NE OF PP ON MEKONG EAST BANK (UPI NYDN, PHINQ).
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3. KOMPONG CHAM AIRPORT SHELLED. FANK CONTINUES PRESSURE TO RETAKE TEXTILE FACTORY AS NEXT STEP TO BREAK THROUGH TO AIRPORT DEFENDERS (SUN, AP; WP).

4. SOUTHERLAND (CSM) REPORTS FROM SAIGON THAT SVN FIGHTING HAS SETTLED INTO PATCHWORK PATTERN AS EACH SIDE NIBBLES TO "ROUND OUT A CORNER HERE OR CLEAN

OUT A POCKET THERE". SOME PROVINCES ARE AT WAR WHILE OTHERS HAVE RELATIVE PEACE, BUT SO FAR NO SIGNIFICANT CHANGES TO POWER BALANCE EXCEPT AT LE MINH WHERE NVA OVERRAN ARVN BATTALION CAMP. LE MINH CAPTURE MAY BE PART OF NVA EFFORT TO CLEAR BORDER AREAS TO COMPLETE ROAD NETWORK. COMMUNIST ROADS NOW LINKED FROM NVN TO NORTH OF KONTUM CITY, GIVING THEM INCREASED MOBILITY AND CAUSING SAIGON CONCERN. GVN ALSO WORRIED BY EVIDENCE OF 130-MM ARTILLERY (16 MI. RANGE) 35 TO 40 MI. FROM SAIGON. NVA NOW HAS SUPPLIES IN PLACE FOR NATIONWIDE OFFENSIVE THAT GVN DOES NOT EXPECT BEFORE NEXT SPRING, BUT "MINI-OFFENSIVES" AIMED AT RECAPTURING HAMLETS LOST SINCE JAN. CONSIDERED POSSIBLE. GVN CASUALTIES HIGH SINCE C-F. ON POLITICAL FRONT, NO PROGRESS BEING MADE TOWARD RECONCILIATION OUTLINED IN PEACE AGREEMENT; IF ANYTHING, PROPAGANDA EXCHANGES HAVE RECENTLY GROWN MORE BITTER.

5. GVN COMMANDER IN PLEIKU SAYS COMMUNISTS IN AREA ARE PREPARING FOR MAJOR OFFENSIVE NEXT YEAR, AND HINTS THAT ARVN MAY ATTACK FIRST (UPI, NYDN; AP, SUN). ARVN FEARS AT LEAST 200 RANGERS KILLED AT LE MINH; SURVIVORS IN AREA BEING SUPPORTED BY AIR AND ARTILLERY; ONLY ABOUT 15 OF GARRISON OF 293 (PLUS DEPENDENTS) HAVE REACHED GVN LINES SO FAR (AP, SUN). GVN SAYS DAILY TRUCE VIOLATIONS ROSE TO 92 (UPI, PHINQ).

6. NVA OFFICER, KEEN US MOVIE FAN, AT RECEPTION IN SAIGON SAID SHIRLEY TEMPLE HIS FAVORITE, AND REFUSED TO BELIEVE SHE IS NOW MIDDLE-AGED AND HAS SERVED AS UNCLASSIFIED

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USUN DIPLOMAT (UPI, WP).

7. DENMAN (NYT), FROM SAIGON, DESCRIBES HOME OF VN BANKER AND HIS PEDIATRICS-PROFESSOR WIFE AS COMBINING BEST OF EAST AND WEST FOR GRACIOUS LIVING. COUPLE SAYS THEY ACQUIRED TASTE FOR INTERIOR DECORATING WHILE WORKING IN US.

CHINA

8. CELEBRATIONS MARKING 24TH NATIONAL DAY BEGAN SUNDAY WITH RECEPTION FOR 1,500 IN BANQUET HALL OF PEKING'S GREAT HALL; USLO'S BRUCE AMONG THOSE ATTENDING; CHOU AND CHIANG CHING ON HAND, BUT NOT MAO. NO SPEECHES AT RECEPTION, BUT CHOU GAVE TOAST TO "FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN

THE CHINESE PEOPLE AND THE PEOPLES OF THE WORLD";
DEPUTY HEAD OF SOVIET DELEGATION TO SINO-SOVIET BOUNDARY
TALKS AND SIHANOUK AMONG OTHER GUESTS. ONCE OBLIGATORY
NATIONAL PARADE AGAIN MISSING, BUT PEKING WAS ABLAZE
WITH LIGHTS AS THOUSANDS STROLLED AND CYCLED AROUND
TIEN AN MEN (REUTER WP, NYT; AP, SUN).

9. NCNA REPORTED ABUNDANT SUPPLIES ON MARKET SHELVES
FOR NATIONAL DAY. JAPANESE REPORTS FROM PEKING SAID
CHINA EXPECTS GRAIN PRODUCTION TO EXCEED 1971'S RECORD
250 MILLION TONS; ADDED THAT PEKING'S WORKERS, PEASANTS,
SOLDIERS, STUDENTS AND OFFICE WORKERS PREPARED TO
STAGE MORE THAN 1,000 THEATRICAL WORKS IN MAJOR PARKS.
IDEOLOGICAL TONE SET BY SPECIAL EDITORIAL IN MAJOR
NEWSPAPERS WARNING OF DANGER THAT SOCIALIST COUNTRY
COULD "DEGENERATE" INTO CAPITALISM AND CAUTIONING

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PFOR
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973STATE194979
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: EA/P:STAFF:PP/EB
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: SECSTATE WASHDC
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731057/aaaabpzj.tel
Line Count: 181
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ORIGIN EA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: collinp0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21-Aug-2001 by bryansd0>; APPROVED <04-Feb-2002 by collinp0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: OCTOBER 1 PRESS SUMMARY INDOCHINA
TAGS: XC, US
To: SAIGON BANGKOK CANBERRA JAKARTA MANILA MOSCOW PHNOM PENH RANGOON SEOUL AIT TAIPEI
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005